

F

84

1365

L.S.A.

Rev. John Bathurst Leane,
with the kind regards
of his obt. servant
Charles Leane

July 8. 1850

SOME NOTICES
of
Samuel Gorton,

ONE OF THE FIRST SETTLERS OF WARWICK, R. I.,

DURING HIS RESIDENCE AT

PLYMOUTH, PORTSMOUTH, AND PROVIDENCE:

chiefly derived from early
Manuscripts;

WITH A BRIEF INTRODUCTORY MEMOIR.

See - 6
"Truth is the eye of History."--*Polybius.*

BOSTON:
PRINTED BY COOLIDGE AND WILEY,
1850.

F8k
.G65

330

00

P R E F A C E.

THE subject of this notice needs no formal introduction to the reader of our early local history. The somewhat conspicuous part which he played in that drama of real life in which our Puritan Ancestors were the immediate actors, has secured to him a prominent place in the Annals of New England.

This notice was prepared for the July number of the New England Historical and Genealogical Register, and *twenty-five copies only* have been reprinted in this form, for private distribution.

CHARLES DEANE.

Cambridge, July 1. 1850.



SOME NOTICES
OF
SAMUEL GORTON.

SAMUEL GORTON, "a citizen of London," was born at Gorton, in England, in the early part of the seventeenth century. He arrived at Boston in 1636, where he resided probably but for a short period; and thence went to Plymouth. The reasons for his removal from the Massachusetts colony are variously given. Knowles, in his life of Roger Williams, says: "Here, his religious opinions and conduct occasioned, as we are told, much disturbance, and he removed to Plymouth, in 1637." It is not unlikely that he took part in the antinomian controversy, which was raging in the Massachusetts Colony at that time, and connected himself, as he naturally would, with what proved to be the weaker party. Cotton, in his reply to Williams, in the appendix to the Bloody Tenet, page 5, says: "Gorton at first arrived in our Bay, and continued a while in our Towne, till a reverened Minister in London, (Mr. Walker) sent over Directions to some friends, to demand an £100 debt of him, which he having borrowed of a Citizen, the Citizen bequeathed it to some good use, whereof Mr. Walker was called to some Trust. But then Mr. Gorton departed out of this Jurisdiction to

Plymouth," &c. This statement has been copied both by Hubbard and Mather; but one writer, who erroneously attributes the passage to Mather, questions its truth, on the ground that an escape to Plymouth would not necessarily be an escape from his creditor.

However cordial his reception at Plymouth may have been at first,—for Morton tells us, “he gave some hopes that he would have proved an useful instrument,”—it is certain that he soon rendered himself obnoxious to the good people of that colony. This same writer says that he, “by little and little, discovered himself to be a proud and pestilent seducer, and deeply leavened with blasphemous and familistical opinions,” &c. Morton also tells us, that he fell into a controversy with Mr. Smith, their late minister at Plymouth, and was summoned to appear at the Court held there the “fourth of December, 1638, to answer the said Mr. Smith’s complaint; and there he carried so mutinously and seditiously, as that he was for the same, and for his turbulent carriages towards both magistrates and ministers in the presence of the Court, sentenced to find sureties for his good behaviour, during the time he should stay in the jurisdiction, which was limited to fourteen days, and also amerced to pay a considerable fine.”

In a document we publish concerning Gorton, on another page, it is said, that “The first complaynt that came against him for w^h hee was brought before a^rthorety, was by M^r. Ralph Smith, who being of Gortons acquaintance Receuid him & his famely in to his house.” Gorton afterwards “becomming trublesom, * * * Mr. Smyth desired him to prouid elcewhere for himself; but Gorton Refused sayeing hee had as good intrist in the house as Mr. Smith had.” He was then brought before

the Court, who ordered him to “prouid other ways for him self by a time apointed.” Some time after this, for an alleged contempt of Court,—in opposing the course taken with a woman of Gorton’s acquaintance, who came to Plymouth, and was complained of for “vnworthy & ofenciue speeches,”—“hee was comitted till hee could procure surties for his good behaiōr till y^e next Court, which was a ginorall Court.” That time having arrived, Gorton was called before the Court, where he exhibited great insolence and contumacy ; so much so, that “diuers peopel being present, desired leaue of y^e Gouvernōr to speake complayning of his seditious carriag & requested the Court not to suffer these abuceses, but to inflict condigen punishment, & yet notwithstanding, all wee did to him was but to take the forfeiture of his foresayd bonds for his good behaiōr: nay being but low & poor in his estate wee took not aboue 8 or 10 pound of it least it might lye to heauey upon his wife & Children.” He was, however, ordered to “geet new surties for his behaiour, tell y^e next ginorall Court or till shuch time as hee departed y^e Gouverment.” He procured his sureties, but immediately left for Rhode Island.

Gorton’s own account of these proceedings differs somewhat from the foregoing. In his letter to Morton, he says: “A difference betweene Mr. Ralph Smith and my selfe was not the ocation of Plimouths dealing with me, **** If you had recorded truly you should haue made report of Plimouths dealing with me had bin their threatning of a widow one Ellin Aldridge whom they said they would send out of the Collony as a vacabond *** when as nothing was laid to her charge, only it was whispered priuatly that she had smiled in your congregation, whervpon

it may be the Church grew iealous that she did not well like your Doctrine and graue polished Church order, And she hauing bin a woman of good report in England and newly come ouer, being carefull of her credit she fled into the woods to escape the shame which was threatened to be put upon her, there remaining seuerall dayes and nights, at the least part of the nights and absented her self againe before people stirred in the morning; my speaking on her behalfe (she being then my wiues servant) was the ocaation that Plimouths government tooke to deale with me." He says he was then called before a Court to be examined, "and one of them inlarging vpon a point agravating the matter more then it deserued, I said he spake hyperbollically wherevpon they asked your Elder then present, what was the meaning of that word, and he was pleased to expound it that I told the magistrate that he lyed." Morton, it will be perceiued, makes no mention of the proceedings with Gorton, relative to his "wiues servant." The other narrative, from which we have extracted above, makes mention of this, but assigns the difficulty with Mr. Smith, as furnishing the occasion of the first complaint against him. Concerning this difficulty with Mr. Smith, Gorton says that he knows no occasion of offence that he gave him, "vnlesse it was because his [Smith's] ancient wife and others of his family frequented mine vsually morning and euening in the time of family exercises, and so did a religious maid liuing then with your teacher Mr. Reyner, mistriss Smith often expressing her self how glad she was that she could come into a family where her spirit was refreshed in the ordinances of god as in former dayes which she said was much decayed and allmost worne out of religion since she came to

Plimouth; In this offence taken by Mr. Smith he applied himselfe to the gouernment of Plimouth for help to breake his couenant made with my self, I hauing hired one part of his house for the terme of foure whole yeares." Gorton says, he was "perswaded to put the matter to arbitterment the men were apointed, my writings deliuered," &c.; but they "were comanded out of their hands by the Gouvernour," and "the Court proceeded to fine and banishment, together with sentence giuen that my family should depart out of my owne hired house, within the space of fourteene dayes vpon the penalty of another great summe of money (besides my fine paid) and their further wrath and displeasure, which time to depart fell to be in a mighty storme of snow, as I haue seene in the country, my wife being turned out of doore in the said storme with a young child sucking at her breast," &c.

It is somewhat difficult, from these narratives, to point out the exact line of truth. There can be but little doubt that Gorton's opinions were offensive to the people at Plymouth; and, whatever may have been the immediate occasion of their dealing with him, his heresies must have swelled the tide of feeling against him. It is not unlikely that he exercised the office of preacher at Plymouth to those who would listen to him; and Cotton describes him as a "proditious minter of exhorbitant novelties, (the very dregs of Familisme)." On the other hand, it is equally clear that Gorton was turbulent and contumacious; that he was a man of violent passions, and easily excited to contention. His peculiar views of society and government, also, whatever they may have been, were, without doubt, questionable in their character, and disorganizing in their tendency.

The precise time that Gorton left Plymouth for Rhode Island, is not known. Callender says he came there in June, 1638. Staples, even more minute, says he was received an inhabitant there, on the 20th of June, of that year. Unfortunately, he gives us no authority for this date; but if he and Callender are correct, Morton must have erred, in stating that Gorton was brought before the Court at Plymouth, the 4th of December, 1638. Staples thinks that Morton has anticipated a whole year in this; that it must have been in 1637. The complaint, to which he was called to answer at that time, was made by Mr. Smith; and Morton says he was ordered to leave the jurisdiction in fourteen days. "In some short time after he departed to Rhode Island." Gorton himself, associates his banishment with Smith's complaint, and says he was ordered to depart within the space of fourteen days; and intimates that he complied with the order. Supposing this to have occurred in December, 1637, Gorton and his family must have gone to Aquetneck before the period of the settlement there, which is altogether improbable. The settlement at Portsmouth was made in March, 1638. In the narrative published on another page, the order of events relating to Gorton's different arraignments at Plymouth is differently stated. Smith's complaint is first in order and disposed of, and we should infer from the narrative, in view of all the subsequent proceedings against him, that he must have remained there a considerable time after. If Morton means to state that Gorton was banished in December, and is correct as to the month, and if he left about that time for Rhode Island, he is probably correct also in the year given, 1638. Gorton says that the "time to depart fell to be in a mighty storme of

snow," which he might have experienced in December or in March. The positive statements of Callender and Staples, that Gorton was at Aquetneck in June, 1638, are entitled to consideration.

Gorton was welcomed by the little band at Portsmouth, the most of whom were outcasts from Massachusetts. "There hee had entertainment beecaus hee made them beleue that hee was persecuted for his Religion at Plymouth." Winslow intimates that difference in religion was not the ground of "the hard measure he received at Plymouth." However this may have been, it is quite certain that Gorton gave no better satisfaction to the people at Portsmouth than he did at Plymouth. A detailed account of his conduct there, and of the dealings of the government with him, as given on the authority of an eyewitness, will be found on another page. These narratives, written in controversy, and with a view of making out a case, should, on either side, be received with some allowance. Whether Gorton merited the severe treatment he there received, may be a question. What the grounds of their proceedings against him were, aside from those stated in the narrative alluded to, is not so clear. From the letter of Roger Williams to John Winthrop, on another page, it cannot be doubted, that the peculiarity of his religious opinions, united to the spirit and manner in which they were presented, rendered him odious. He was opposed to the clergy as an established class, and probably spared no pains to vent his spleen, and to throw contempt and ridicule upon them. In proof of this, we quote from the letter of Mr. Williams, above alluded to: "Mr. Gorton, hauing foully abused both high & low at aquedneck, is now bewiching & madding poor prouidence both with his vnclean

& foule sensurs of all y^e ministers of this Countrey, for w^{ch} my self hane in Christs name withstood him; & allso denying all vizible & extarnall ordinances, **** all most all suck in his poyson as at first thay did at aquednick." Gorton's contemptuous spirit, his vehement and abusive manner gave more offence, possibly, than his heresies. It seems he was successful in making some converts to his opinions. Gorton has been accused of being opposed to civil magistracy. Whether he was or not, he had but little respect for those in authority. He says, however, that he carried himself, "obeidiently to the Gouernment of Plimouth, so farre as it became me at the least, **** ffor I vnderstood that they had Comission wherin authoritie was deriued, which authoritie I reuerenced; but Rhode Island at that time had none, therefore no authoritie legally deriued to deale with me Neither had they the choice of the people, but set vp themselues, I know not any more that was present in their Creation but a Clergie man who blessed them in their inauguration, and I thought my selfe as fitt and able to gouerne my selfe and family, *** as any that were then vpon Rhode Island." Entertaining such notions of the government at Rhode Island, he probably did not hesitate to express them.

Gorton must have behaved unseemly at Portsmouth, and must have outraged the feelings of that little community to no inconsiderable extent, to have warranted them in resorting to the extremities of the whipping-post. A reference to his "presentment" by the Grand Jury at that place, may shed some light upon this point.

From Aquetneck, Gorton went to Providence. Staples says, "at what time, cannot be ascertained, though it was before November 17,

1641." Callender says, "he tarried in Rhode Island till 1639-40." We know from Williams's letter to Winthrop, quoted above, dated 8th March, 1641, N. S., that at that time he had been in Providence long enough to involve himself deeply in controversy, and to bring the majority of the inhabitants over to his views. At the time of his punishment at Portsmouth, soon after which he left the Island, it is said that "the weather was very cold." Roger Williams gave Gorton a kind reception at Providence, though he had no sympathy with his peculiar views. That colony, at that time, had no charter of government, and "the inhabitants were associated together by a few brief articles of voluntary agreement." It is said that Gorton was never enrolled as an inhabitant of that town. Mr. Williams says: "Sume few & my self doe withstand his inhabitation and towne priueledges without Confession & reformation of his vsiuell & inhuman practises at portsmouth." Gorton, however, "in January, 1641-2, purchased land at Pawtuxet, in the south part of the territory, then included under the name of Providence, and within the limits of the present town of Cranston." Here "he was soon joined by a number of persons, who were expelled from Aquetneck on account of their attachment to his principles," or to himself personally.

Before Gorton's arrival at Providence, a dispute had sprung up among the inhabitants respecting the boundaries of their lands. Gorton took part in this quarrel, which, though restrained for a time by Williams, soon became serious; and it is said that "some few drops of blood on either side" were shed. The party to which Gorton was attached prevailed, and the "weaker party" applied to the Massachu-

setts government for aid and counsel. Their petition, which is in the handwriting of Benedict Arnold, is dated the 17th November, 1641, and is signed by Arnold and twelve others. It will be found on another page. This petition was not signed by Roger Williams. We have seen that he had previously written a letter to Winthrop, in which he set forth his grievances, and expressed his fears as to the result of Gorton's demeanor at Providence.

The Massachusetts government did not grant the prayer of the petitioners. Winthrop says, "We answered them, that we could not levy any war, &c., without a general court. For counsel we told them, that except they did submit themselves to some jurisdiction, either Plymouth or our's, we had no calling or warrant to interpose in their contentions, but if they were once subject to any, then they had a calling to protect them." The disturbances continuing, four of the aggrieved party at Pawtuxet, (William Arnold, Robert Cole, William Carpenter, and Benedict Arnold,) in September, 1642, "appeared before the General Court, at Boston, and yielded themselves and their lands, to be governed and protected by Massachusetts. They were accepted," and the latter government immediately extended her jurisdiction over the whole colony of Providence; and, on the 28th of October, 1642, gave them notice to the effect that William Arnold and others had submitted to their jurisdiction, and if they had any complaints to make, or any cause to try, the courts of Massachusetts were open to them.

The justice of the course pursued by the Massachusetts government in this affair has been questioned. Providence was beyond her chartered limits, and the right to extend her laws or authority over another

colony, merely at the request of a minority of the people of that colony, may well be doubted. Indeed, her jurisdiction was clearly confined within her chartered limits. This act aroused the indignation of Gorton and his associates, and they sent a letter to the "men of Massachusetts," of great length, couched in no gentle language, and filled with discussions of theology, and other matters difficult to be understood. On the reception of this letter, the chief men, magistrates, and ministers, according to Gorton, took counsel together; "and they perusing of our writings, framed out of them twenty six particulars, or thereabouts, which they said were blasphemous."

After this letter had been despatched to the Bay, Gorton and his friends thought it the part of prudence to retire from Pawtuxet. They accordingly took up their residence at Shawomet, now Old Warwick, and purchased of Miantonomo, in January, 1642-3, a tract of land, which "now comprises the town of Coventry, and nearly the whole of the town of Warwick." Here Gorton expected to remain unmolested; but he was mistaken. Pomham, Sachem of Shawomet, laid claim to the lands which he and his companions had purchased at that place. Although Pomham had signed the deed of sale, yet he said he did it through fear of Miantonomo, and never received any of the price of the land; he also denied the right of Miantonomo to control him, claiming to be independent himself. It is difficult to determine the truth of these matters, at this day; but it is affirmed, with much confidence, that this chief, and Sacononoco, Sachem of Pawtuxet, who made similar complaints, were subject to Miantonomo; that Miantonomo had the right to direct the sale of the land, and that the purchase of Gorton and his companions

was valid. However this may be, Pomham and Sacononoco came to Boston in June, 1643, subjected themselves to the Massachusetts government, and claimed their protection. They were accepted, and, on the 12th day of September, a warrant was issued "against the inhabitants of Shawomet, summoning them to appear at the General Court, then convened at Boston, to answer the complaints of Pomham and Sacononoco." Gorton and company declined the summons, declaring that they were beyond the jurisdiction of Massachusetts; in answer to which they were informed that a commission would be sent to Shawomet, to investigate the whole matter in dispute. That such commission would be attended with a "sufficient guard" to protect it from "violence or injury." Notice of their approach being given, the people of Shawomet despatched a letter to the commissioners, giving them to understand that, if they came as friends to settle difficulties, they were welcome; but if they came in any "hostile way," they came at their peril. The reply of the commissioners to this letter was any thing but conciliatory, and was well calculated to excite alarm. They soon approached the feeble settlement, with every demonstration of hostility, while Gorton made preparation for defence. After an unsuccessful attempt at negotiation, the affair terminated in Gorton and his party, to the number of eleven, being taken prisoners and carried to Boston. Gorton says they capitulated, and consented to accompany the commissioners, provided they might go as "free men and neighbors." But they were treated as prisoners, and, on their arrival at Boston, were thrown into the common jail, without either "bail or mainprize."

At the next session of the General Court, the prisoners were brought

up, and the following charge exhibited against them. "Upon much examination, and serious consideration of your writings, with your answers about them, we do charge you to be a blasphemous enemy of the true religion of our Lord Jesus Christ and his holy ordinances, and also of civil authority among the people of God, and particularly in this jurisdiction." Previous to this, Gorton and his companions had passed through a severe ordeal of examination, by the court and the elders, relative to their theological opinions. The main charge brought against them seems to have been *heresy*, as will be seen by the minute account of their examination in Winthrop's Journal and in Gorton's narrative. All but three of the magistrates thought that Gorton ought to be put to death; but the greater part of the deputies dissented. The sentence which he finally received was cruel. He was 'ordered to be confined to Charlestown, there to be kept at work, and to wear such bolts *or* irons as might hinder his escape; and if he broke his confinement, or by speech or writing published or maintained any of the blasphemous *or* abominable heresies wherewith he had been charged by the general court, or should reproach or reprove the churches of our Lord Jesus Christ in these United colonies, or the civil government, &c., that upon conviction thereof, upon a trial by jury, he should suffer death.' Six of the other prisoners were sentenced to be confined on the same conditions, and were sent to different towns in the Colony. Gorton's sentence was dated "the 3d of the 9th month, 1643."

Gorton and his companions were released from confinement in January, 1644. They received their liberty on the following terms: "that if they, or any of them, shall after fourteen days after such

enlargement come within any part of our jurisdiction, either in Massachusetts, or in or near Providence, or any of the lands of Pomham or Sachoncho, or elsewhere within our jurisdiction, then such person or persons shall be apprehended, * * * * and shall suffer death by course of law." These unhappy schismatics and outcasts then wended their way towards their home at Shawomet. They were soon informed, in a reply to a letter which they addressed to Governor Winthrop, that Shawomet was included in their order of banishment; and, as was their intention when they left Massachusetts, they continued their journey to Rhode Island. There they hired houses and grounds to plant upon for the preservation of their families. It would seem from Gorton's account, that their residence here was not agreeable to Massachusetts, and that proposals were made to the authorities of the Island, to have him and his companions delivered up into their hands again; but that "the people of the Island did altogether dislike and detest any such course to be held with us." Gorton's narrative of all these proceedings is very minute, and, if mainly to be relied upon, reflects no credit on the Massachusetts authorities. Their whole conduct towards Gorton and his companions, from about the period of their removal to Shawomet, until their summary banishment from the Massachusetts colony, was atrocious.

It may not be out of place here to state that Plymouth Colony laid claim to the territory which embraced Shawomet, as being within the bounds of her patent; and that the "Commissioners for the United Colonies," on complaint of the Massachusetts Government against Gorton and his companions then living at Shawomet, passed an Act, on

the 7th of September, 1643, authorizing that Government to "proceed against them according to what they shall find just."

In the year 1644, Gorton, with his friends, Houlden and Greene, went to England. "They carried with them the Act of submission of the Narragansett Indians to the English Government. On their arrival in England, they presented to the Commissioners of Foreign Plantations, appointed by Parliament, a memorial against the Colony of Massachusetts, for the violent and injurious expulsion of themselves and companions from Shawomet." A copy of this memorial "was enclosed in the order passed by the Commissioners on the 15th of May, 1646, and sent to Massachusetts. On the receipt of it, the Colony of Massachusetts appointed Mr. Edward Winslow, one of the leading men in Plymouth Colony, their agent, to proceed to England." In 1646, Gorton published his "*Simplicities Defence*," containing a more full relation of his grievances. These relate mainly to his treatment by the Massachusetts Government. Winslow replied in a book called "*Hypoerisie Vnmasked*," &c. This book is of exceeding rarity. The only copy to which access was known, a few years since, was in the British Museum. Two or three copies of the work are now owned here, and, as it contains much valuable matter, relating to the Gorton controversy, it should be reprinted. It advocates the Massachusetts side of the question.

This appeal to the commissioners resulted in instructions to the Massachusetts Government, not to molest those who claimed lands at Shawomet, and to defer the settlement of territorial claims until a more convenient season. Gorton returned to this country in 1648, after an absence of about four years. He landed at Boston, and would have

been arrested, but for a letter from the Earl of Warwick which he produced, granting him protection. He joined his companions at Shawomet, which was then called Warwick, in honor of the noble Earl of that name. This territory "was considered within the Providence Plantations, and was governed by the charter of 1644, though not named in it." Massachusetts did not relinquish her claim of jurisdiction till after 1651. In 1678, the year after Gorton's death, she repealed the act of banishment against him and his associates. After his return from England, Gorton continued to reside at Warwick, until his death.

Mackie says, "Gorton is known to have had three sons, Samuel, John, and Benjamin; and six daughters; Maher, who married Daniel Coles; Mary, who married Peter Greene, and afterwards John Sanford; Sarah, who married William Mace; Anna, who married John Warner; Elizabeth, who married John Crandall; and Susannah, who married Benj. Barton. His son, Samuel Gorton, lived to be ninety four years old; and most of the children survived to a great age."

It is somewhat difficult to form a true estimate of the character of Gorton. The accounts of him which have been handed down by his opponents, should be received with some grains of allowance. He seems to have been a strong lover of liberty in its largest sense, and to have had but little respect for authority, either civil or ecclesiastical. He had a strong religious sentiment, accompanied with peculiar religious notions. He was an enthusiast, was independent and fearless in expressing his opinions, and in defending what he conceived to be his rights. Though there is no reason to doubt that he was "conscientious," it is equally certain that he was eminently "contentious," and easily

exasperated. Indeed, he was a sort of firebrand in the midst of the little communities into which he was here thrown. Of his opinions, it is difficult to form a definite idea from his writings. They were evidently of the transcendental order. That he was a man of some talent and learning, his writings abundantly testify. In his letter to Morton, published entire in the fourth volume of Mr. Force's Historical Tracts, there are some passages which breathe an excellent spirit, and which exhibit much true eloquence. At the same time, whenever he engages in any religious discussion, he employs a dialect utterly incoherent to the uninitiated.

Staples says that Gorton seems to have commanded the respect and confidence of his fellow-townsmen. That on his return from England, he was chosen one of the town magistrates, and was almost constantly employed in public business, during the remainder of his life. As he advanced in years, it is quite likely that his passions became more mild, and that the temper of his mind, through the sufferings he had experienced, was brought more in harmony with the spirit of the religion which he professed.

This brief and very imperfect outline of the history of one whose name will ever be connected with our early Annals, is here given as an introduction merely to the document which follows.*

*In preparing this brief sketch, I have consulted Gorton's "Simplicities Defence;" his Letter to Morton, published entire in Force's Tracts, Vol. IV.; Winslow's "Hypocrasie Vnmasked;" Cotton's Reply to Williams, in the Appendix to "Bloody Tenent;" Morton's Memorial; Callender's Historical Discourse; Hutchinson's Massachusetts; Savage's Edition of Winthrop; Knowles's Life of Roger Williams; Potter's His. of Narragansett,

AN ANSWER TO Y^E MANY SLANDERS & FALSEHOODS CONTAINED IN A
BOOK CALLED SIMPLICITIES DEFENCE AGAINST SEVEN HEADED POLICE:
WHERE IN SAMUELL GORTON IS PROVED A DISTURBER OF SIUELL
SOCIETIES AND A TURBULANT DISTURBER OF Y^E PECE OF ALL GOURE-
MENTS & PLACES WHERE HEE & HIS COMPANY CALLED GORTINIIONS
EUEER CAME.*

And becaus hee often mentioneth y^e hard measuer hee Receiued at Ply-
mouth, still carrying it on as if diffarence in Religion had beene y^e ground of
it, therefore I thought good here to giue the Reader to vnderstand what was

and Mackie's *Life of Gorton*, in Sparks's *Am. Biog.* I have extracted freely from Gorton, and other early writers, preferring, where it is possible, that they should speak to us in their own language. A few passages, from some of the modern works above mentioned, have been taken, and in some instances no reference made, but the usual marks of quotation given. I have consulted Mr. Mackie's *Memoir*, with much pleasure, and acknowledge my indebtedness to it. I was, however, a little impressed, on its perusal, with the feeling, that his sympathies with his hero led him to adopt too implicitly some statements of Gorton, to the exclusion of other testimony, which is entitled to a hearing. Mr. Mackie, probably, had no opportunity to consult Winslow's reply to Gorton.

* A short time since, there was placed in my hands an ancient-looking manuscript, of twenty six pages, which, on perusal, I found to contain a brief narrative of Samuel Gorton, during his residence at Plymouth, Portsmouth, and at Providence. I had never seen the relation there given before, and could form no idea, at first, as to its author. It contains a copy of a letter from Roger Williams to John Winthrop, and also one by William Arnold; neither of which had I ever seen before. In a document copied from the Mass. Records, and published in the Rhode Island Historical Collections, Vol. II., page 233, there is an allusion to this letter of Roger Williams. The paper relates to the Gorton controversy, and the letter is spoken of as being printed in a certain book, written in reply to Gorton's charges against the Massachusetts Government. It occurred to me that this might refer to Edward

y^e Ground of his truble there, that so all men may know what Religion this man is of: for y^e tree is best known by its fruite.

The first complaynt that came against him for w^{ch} hee was brought before athorety, was by Mr Ralph Smith, who being of Gortons aquaintance Re-

Winslow's "*Hypocrisie Vnmasked*," prepared and published in London, in 1646, in reply to Gorton's "*Simplicities Defence*," which appeared in London the same year; and that the manuscript alluded to might be a portion of that book. I have had the pleasure, by the kindness of a fortunate owner, of examining a copy of this exceedingly rare work, and find that the MS. is in substance a part of Winslow's book. Indeed, so far as it goes, it is *almost* word for word. That it is not a copy, I infer from the occasional variation in words and sentences, and also in the orthography, which in a literal copy would not appear. Besides, the MS. contains passages not to be found in the book, which would seem to favor the idea that the former was a portion of the original draft of the latter, though it is not in the handwriting of Winslow; and, from its appearance, I should not carry it back quite to that period. In copying the MS, I have taken some liberty with the punctuation.

Winslow's book is divided into three parts. From the commencement to page sixty-two inclusive, it consists mainly of documents that were probably furnished him by the Massachusetts government, to answer the charge of Gorton before the Commissioners. In this first part, with a good many other documents, are found the letters of Williams and Arnold, and also the "presentment" of Gorton by the Grand Jury. These were probably not designed for publication at first. The second division of the book, consists of the narrative concerning Gorton, and was probably written in England, after noticing the appearance of Gorton's book. It commences as follows, differing a little, it will be noticed, from the commencement of the MS. here published.

"A partievlar Answer to the Manifold Slanders and abominable Falsehoods contained in a Book, called *Simplicities defence against seven-headed policy*: Wherein *Samuel Gorton* is proved a disturber of Civill Societies, desperately dangerous to his Country-men the English in *New-Engl.* and notoriously slanderous in what he hath Printed of them."

"When first I entertained the desires of the Countrey to come over to answer the complaints of Samuel Gorton, * * * I little thought then to have appeared in print: but

could him & his famely in to his house w^t much humilety & christian Respeck, promising him as free use of it as him self: but gorton becomming troublesom, after meanes vsed to Remoue y^e ofences taken by Mr Smith, but to no purpose, Grouing still more insolent, Mr Smyth desired him to prouid cleewhere for himself: but Gorton Refused sayeing hee had as good intrist in the house as Mr Smith had: and when hee was brought before authority stoutly maintained it to our amasment, but was to depart by ordere, & to prouid other ways for him self by a time apointed. and not long after there came a woman of his acquaintance to plymoth, diuers came to the Gourner with complaints against her, being a stranger, for vnworthy & ofenciue speeches and carregis vsed by her: where upon y^e Gourner sent to her to know her businesse, & comāded her departure, & ordered y^e seaman that brought her to Return her to y^e place from whence shee came, at his next passage thither: but Gorton sayd shee should not goe, for hee had ocasion to employ her: where upon y^e Gourner sent for him, it being in y^e time of a court, & becaus hee had hidde her, stood in Justification of his practise, & Refused to obaye y^e comānd of the court, who seconded y^e Gourners order, hee was comitted till hee could procure surties for his good behauior till y^e next Court, which was a Ginorall Court, & there to answer this contempt. y^e time being come & y^e Court set, gorton was called: but y^e Gouverner being wearied with speech to other cāses, Requested one of his asistants y^t was present at his Comitēt, and priuey to y^e whoal caus, to

comming into *England*, and finding a Booke written by Mr. Gorton called *Simplicities defence against seron-headed Policy*: * * * I then conceiued my self bound in duty to take off the many gross and publike scandalls held forth therein," &c.

The third division of the work has no reference to the Gorton controversy. This part has been republished by Dr. Young, in his "Chronicles of the Pilgrims."

declare y^e same. this assistant no sooner beegane to show y^e Countrey y^e eaus of his bonds in y^e great affront hee had given y^e gouernment, but Gorton stretchin out his hand towards his face, sayd with a loud voyce, if Sathan will accuse y^e brethren let him come downe from Jehoshuahs Right hand & stand here: and y^t done in a seditious manner turned him self to y^e peopele and sayd, with his armes spread abroad, ye see good peopele how ye are abused, stand for your liberty, & lett them not bee partys & Judges, with many other oprobrious speches of that kind. here upon diuers peopel* being present, desired leane of y^e Gouvernōr to speake, complayning of his seditious carriag, & requested the Court not to suffer these abucesses, but to inflict condigen punishment: & yet notwithstanding, all wee did to him was but to take the forfeiture of his foresayd bonds for his good behaiōr: nay being but low & poor in his estate, wee took not a boue 8 or 10 pound of it, least it might lye to heaney upon his wife & children: but he must either geet new surties for his behaiour tell y^e next ginorall Court, or till shuch time as hee departed y^e Gouverment, or lye in prison till he could. now hee knowing his outrageous passions w^h hee could not restrain, hee procured surties: but emēdatley left plymouth & went to Rhod Island, where vpon complaynt of ouer persiceention, hee found present Reliefe there: yet soon afterward hee abused them in a greater measuer, & had heauier yet too lite a punishment inflicted on him: & all for breach of the Siuell peace & notorious contempt of athorety, with out y^e least mention of aney points of religon on the Gournments part but as before.

Whereas† hee complayns of beiḡ denied cohabitation, & of whippig, confinement, Imprisonment, fines & banishment, I confesse all these things befell

* Winslow says: "diuers *elders of Churches.*"

† The passage in Winslow is, "But whereas hee tels us in the same *pag* of denying *cohabitation, and of whippings, confinement, imprisonment, chains, fines, banishment.* I

him, & most Justly to; for hee was bound to y^e good behaviour at plymouth, & brooke his bonds in y^e face of the Court. *§ From plymouth hee went to Rhod Island, & there hee had entertainment, beecaues hee made them beleue that hee was persecuted for his Religion at plymouth: but hee quickley shewed them what Religion hee had beene of at plymoth, and was more turbelant and insolent there then hee had beene at Plymouth: in so much that hee was apperahended for his insolent & turbelent laciuous beehauior. Mr Codington being then Gournour, & Mr Eston deputy Gournour, Gorton was brought before y^e Court, and there hee abused y^e gourners, & told him that hee knew not where his ears stood, & charged him to bee a man vnfitt to make a warrant: [7] the sayd gorton charged y^e Court for wresting witnesses, in this expression: I professe you wrest witnesses: [8] y^e s^d gorton called a free man in open Court saucey boy & jack an apes: and sayd y^e woman that was vpon heer oath would not speake against her mother although shee were daïned wher shee stood: [9] y^e sayd gorton affirmed that Mr Easton behaued himself not like a Judg: & that himself was charged either baecely or falsly: [10] y^e s^d gorton sayd to y^e bench, ye in trud oaths and goe about to catch mee: [11] y^e sayd gorton being reprovèd for his misearriage, held up his hand, & with extremety of speach shook his hand at them, in so much that y^e freemen present sayd hee threatens y^e Court: [12] y^e sayd gorton charged y^e Court with acting y^e second part of plymouth magistrats, who as hee said condemned him in y^e chimney cofer [corner] eare thay heard him speak: [13] y^e said gorton in open Court did professe to mayn-

confesse all these things befell him, and most justly: for hee was bound to the good behaviour at *Plymouth*, and brooke his bonds in the face of the court, whipt & banished at *Rhode Island* for mutinie and sedition in the open Court there: also at *Providence* as factions there though his party grew greater than Mr. *Williams* his better party, as appeares by his and their sad letters to the Government of the *Missachusetts* for helpe and advice,* &c.

* The passage between § § not in Winslow.

tain y^e quarell of another being his maid servant: [14] y^e sd gorton being comanded to prison emperiously resisted y^e athoraty & made open proceclation, sayeing, take away Coddington & carrey him to prison: the gouerner s^d, all you y^t owe y^e king, take away gorton & carrier him to prison: gorton Replyed, all you that doe owne y^e king, take away Coddington and carry him to y^e prison.* William diar secretary. †§And so thay whiped him and banished him; and so gorton left Rhod Iland with Two other men wickes & boulden, who were full as bad as him self or worce, and so went

*These are a part of the charges brought against Gorton by the Grand Jury at Portsmouth, R. I. I give the remainder from Winslow. An explanation of this "presentment." will be found on page 219 from the same book.

"*The Sum of the Presentment of Samuel Gorton at Portsmouth in Rhoad Island, by the Grand Jury:*

"First, that *Samuel Gorton* certaine dayes before his appearance at this Court, sayd, the Government was such as was not to bee subjected unto, forasmuch as it had not a true derivation, because it was altered from what it first was.

"2. That *Samuel Gorton* contumeliously reproached the Magistrates calling them Just Asses.

"3. That the said *Gorton* reproachfully called the Judges, or some of the Justices on the Bench (corrupt Judges) in open Court.

"4. That the said *Gorton* questioned the Court for making him to waite on them two dayes formerly, and that now hee would know whether hee should bee tryed in an hostile way, or by Law, or in Sobriety.

"5. The said *Gorton* alledged in open Court, that hee looked at the Magistrates as Lawyers, and called Mr *Easton*, Lawyer *Easton*.

"6. The said *Gorton* charged the Deputy Governour to bee an Abetter of a Riot, Assault, or Battery, and professed that he would not touch him, no not with a pair of tongues: [tongs] Moreover he said, I know not whether thou hast any cares or no: as also, I think thou knowest not where thy ears stand, and charged him to be a man unfit to make a Warrant."

† The passage between §§ not in Winslow.

to Prōvidence. and there gorton & weekes & houlden increased there turbelent and insolent company: in so much that y^e towne of Prouidence were forced to send a petiton to y^e massachusets for ayde a gainst them which is as followeth§.

prouidence this 17 of Nouember, anno: 1641 — to y^e honered gournour of massachussets to gether with y^e worshipfull assistants & our loueing neighbours there: wee y^e inhabitance of the towne aboue sayd, haueing faire occasions, counted it meet & necessary to giue you true intillegence of y^e insolent and riotous carriages of Samuell gorton & his company, which came from aquednick, w^h continue still as soionmers amongst vs, together with John greene & frācis weston, two w^h haue this long time stood in opposition against vs & against y^e fairest and most just and honest ways of proceedings in order & Gournment, that wee could Rightly and truly use for y^e peaceable preservation & quiet subsitance of our selues and famelys, or any that should haue faire occasion to goe out or come in amongst us. all so six or seuen of our Townsmen w^h were in peaceable Coucnants with us, w^h now by there declamations doe cut them selues off from us, & Jointly under their hands haue openly proclaimed to take party with y^e afore named companys: & so intend, for offte we know or can gather, to haue no manner of hones [t] order or gouernment either ouer them or amongst them, as their writings, words, and actions doe most plainly shew: it would bee tedious to Relate y^e numberlesse number of their vpbraiding taunts, assaults, & threats, & violent kinde of carriage dayly practised against all that either with care or counsell seek to preuent or withstand their lewd lycentious courses: yet in brieft to comit some few of them to your moderate iudgments, lest wee our selues should bee deemed some way blinded in y^e occurrences of things, here is a true copy of their writing inclosed, w^h francis weston gaue us y^e 13th of this present month: thay haueing also set up a copey of y^e same on a tree in y^e street, instead of satisfaction for 15 pounds, which by

way of arbetration of 8 men orderly chosen, & all causes & reasons that could bee found dayley & truly examined & considred iointly together, when hee y^e said francis weston was found liable to paye or make satisfaction in cattell or commodites. but one y^e 15 of this present month, when wee went orderly, openly, & in a warrantable way, to attach some of y^e said francis westons cattell, to driue them to y^e pound, to make him if it were possible to make satisfaction, w^{ch} Samuell gorton & his company getting notice of, came & quarled with us in y^e street, & made a tumultuous hubbub; & all though for our parts wee had before hand most principally armed our selues with patinee peaceably to suffer as much iniury as could possably bee born to preuent all sheding of blood, yet some few drops of blood were spilt on boath sids: & after y^e tumult was partely appeased, & that wee went on orderly in to y^e corne feild to driue the said cattell, y^e said frances weston came furiously Running with a flayall in his hand, & cryed out help Sirs, help Sirs, thay are goeing to steale my cattell: & so continued crying till Randall houldon, John greene, & some others came runing & made a great out cry & hollowing, and crying theeues, theeues, stealing cattell, stealing cattell: & so y^e whole number of there desprat company came riotously runing, & so with much striuing in driuing, hurried away y^e cattell: & then presumptuously answred thay had made a reseue, & that such should bee their practise if any men, at any time, in any case, attach any thing that is theirs. & fully to relat y^e least part of their shuch like words & actions, y^e time & paper would scarce bee profitably spent: neither need wee to aduis your descretions what is likely to bee y^e sad euents of these disorders, if there bloody currants bee not either stopped or turned some other way: for it is plaine to us that if men should continue to resist all manner of order & orderly answering one of another in different cases, thay will suddenly practise not onely cunningly to detain things one from

another, but openly in publike iustly or uniuertly according to their owne wills, disorderly take what thay can come by, first pleadeing necessitey or to maintaine wife & famely; but afterwards boldly to maintaine licentious lust like sauage brute beasts, thay will put no manner of differance betweene houses, lands, goods, wiues, liues, blood, nor any thing will bee precieious in their eyes. If it may therefore please you of gentle curtesie & for y^e preservation of humanity & mankind, to consider our condition and lend us a neighbour like helping hand, & send us such assistance (our necessity vrging us to bee troublesom vnto you) to help vs to bring them to satisfaction, & ease vs of our burden of them at your discretions: wee shall euer more owne it as a deed of great Charity, & take it verely thankfully, & diligently labour in y^e best measure wee can, & constantly practise to Requite your louing kinde-nesse, if you should haue occasion to command us or any of us in any lawfull desine: & if it shall please you to send us any speedey answer, wee shall take it mercy kindly & bee readey & will[ing] to satisfie the messengers and euer remayne *

your louing neighbours and

Joshuah Winsor

respeetue frinds

benedict Arnold

William field

Thomas harris

William man †

William harris

Thomas hopkens

William haukigs ‡

William Wiekendon

hugh bluit ||

Robert West §

William Reinolds

William Carpenter

*This letter is published in the *Mass. Hist. Coll.*, Vol. I., Third Series, p. 2.

† "William Mean."—WINSLOW.

‡ "William W. Hunkinges."—*Mass. Hist. Coll.*, Vol. I., Third Series, page 4. "William Hawking."—WINSLOW.

§ "Robert R. West."—*Mass. Hist. Coll.*

|| "Hugh Bewitt."—*Ibid.* "Hugh Bennit."—WINSLOW.

Mr Roger Williams his letter vnto Mr Winthrop concerning Samuell Gorton: prouidence y^e 8^{mo} 1640. *

Mr Gorton hauing foully abused both high & low at aquednick, is now bewiehing & madding poor prouidence, both with his vnclan & foule sensurs of all y^e ministers of this Countrey, for w^{ch} my self haue in Christs name withstood him: & allso denying all vizable & extarnall ordinances, in depth of familisme, against w^{ch} I haue a littell disputed & writen, & shall y^e most high asisting mee to death; as paul said of asia, & I of prouidence. (almost) all suck in his poyson as at first thay did at aquednick: sume few & my self doe withstand his inhabitation and towne priuelidges without confession & reformation of his vnsiuell & inhuman practises at portsmouth: yet y^e tyde is to strong a gainst vs, & I fear if y^e framer of hearts help not it will force mee to littell patineet, a littell iland next to your prudence. Jehoua himself bee pleased to bee a saintuarey to all whose hearts are perfect with him; in him I desiar vnfaignedly to bee

Your worships true & affectionate

Roger Williams.

Prouidence y^e 25 of y^e 3 month, 1641.

To y^e rest of y^e five men appointed to manedg y^e affaires of our Towne.† — I doe not onely approue of what my neighbours before mee haue written & drected their reasons to a serious consideration with vs concerning Samuell Gorton & his companey; but this much I say y^t it is allso euident &

*Winslow has the date of this letter thus: "Providence 8. 1st 1640." If the 8th of the first month is intended, it would be the 8th of March, 1641, N. S.

† "Patience," and "Prudence," are the names of two islands in Narragansett Bay.

‡ "Of our Towne aforesaid, These are further to giue you to vnderstand; viz. That I doe," &c.—WINSLOW.

may easely bee proued, y^t y^e sayd gorton nor his company are not fitt persons to bee receuid in & made members of such a body in so weake a state as our towne is in at present. my reasons are, first, Samuëll gorton hauing shewed him self an insolent, railing, & turbulent person, not onely in & against those states of gouernment from whence hee came, as is to bee proued, but all so here in this towne since hee haue sojourned in this towne,* in such an inhuman behaiour as becoms not a man y^t should bee thought to bee fit by any reasonable men to bee receiued in to such a poor weak state as wee are in at present.

Secondly: another of his company, one who is much in esteem with him, who openly in a scornfully & deriding maner seeing one of the fīue men y^t was chosen by y^e town & betruſted in y^e towne affaires, coming towards him in y^e streat, hee askeid of one y^t stood by him who that was: y^e other answered him it was one of y^e fīue men appointed for managing of our towne affaires: yea sayd he, hee looks like one of y^e fīue; w^h words import not onely a scorning & deriding of his person of whom then hee spake, but also a despising & scorning of our siuill state, as it were tramping it vnder foot, as thay had done before to other stats before thay came hither, who were of

* There are passages in this letter in Winslow's book, not found in the MS. It there reads, p. 59, "Since hee haue sojourned *here*;" and then adds, "Witnesse his proud challenge, and his upbraiding accusations in his vilifyings and opprobrious terms of and against one of our Combination most wrathfully and shamelesly reviling him, and disturbing of him, and meddling with him, who was imployed and busied in other private occasions, having no just cause so to revile and abuse him, saying also to him (and that of another state) in a base manner, they were like swine that held out their Nose to suck his blood, and that now hee and the rest of his Company would goe and wallow in it also; which are indeed words insufferable; and also despitefully calling him Boy, as though hee would have challenged the field of him: *in such an inhuman behaiour*," &c.

greater strength then wee are: for which cause I cannot see shuch persons to bee fitt to bee recieued into such a weke state as our towne is in at present.

Thirdly: I cannot finde these men to bee reasonable men in their suite vnto y^e Towne to be receiued in as townes men, seeing thay haue all redey had a playn deniall of their request & that by y^e consent of the maior part of ye towne*, & are yet vnanswerable: and also y^t thay seeing y^t their coming to our towne hath brought y^e towne into a hurrey, all most y^e one halfe against y^e other; in w^h estate no towne or sitty can well stand or subsist, which declareth playnely vnto vs y^t their intent is not good, but y^t their aboad so long hear amongst vs is in hope to geet y^e victrey ouer one part of y^e towne; but especialy of those y^t layd y^e first foundation of y^e place, & bought it euen almost with y^e lost of there liues & estates; and afterwards to trample them vnder their feet as some of their words hold forth, or else to driue them out in to y^e same condition to seek out a new prouidence, & to buy it with y^e like hardness as thay first bought this place. these & many other like reasons y^t may be showed doe declare y^t thay are not fitt persons to be receiued in to our mean & weake estate.

Fourthly: & seeing hee who is so well knowne to bee y^e ring leader vnto y^e breach of peace, y^t haue been so notoriously euill to bee a trouble of all sinill stats where hee hath liued, y^t are of farre greater fore then wee are of; especaly y^t state who haue their comission from y^e higher powers with athoraty; what may wee then expect if hee could geet him self in with & amongst vs, where are so many as wee see are dayly redey to tread vs vnder their feet, whome hee calles his frinds: & surely first a breach of our sinill peace and next a ruine of all such as are not of his side, as their dayly practise doth declare: ergo, thay are not fitt persons to be receiued in to our towne.

* "Major part of the Towne, *or very near.*" &c.—WINSLOW.

if it be obiected as some haue blasphemously sayd, that wee are persecutors & doe persecute y^e saints in not receiuing of them in to our towne fellowship; to this I answer, there cannot be proued y^e least shew of any parsecution of those persons either by vs or any other amongst vs*: for first thay haue quiet abode amongst vs, none molesting of them nor any thing thay haue. it canōt be proued but by their owne relation y^e w^{ch} hath been disprouid, that thay were sent out from those places from whence thay cam for Religon; nither are thay medled with here for any such matter; but thay them selues in their insolēt behauiour are more reddey to meddle & to desturb others: thay & others of their company & followers haue rather been troublers & persecutors of the saints of God y^t liued here before any of them came: and thay doe but waite their oppertunity to make them selues manifest in y^t thay doe intend. ergo, it cannot be truly sayd that any persecution is or haue been offered by vs vnto them, if it could possibly bee sayd of them y^t thay are Saints.† and seeing thay doe but linger out y^e time

* Amongst us, “to our knowledge.”—WINSLOW.

† After *Saints*, the following is added from Winslow, p. 61. “Obj: But if it be further obiected, that wee doe not give them the liberty of men, neither doe wee afford them the bowells of mercy, to give them the means of livelihood amongst us, as some have said.

“Answ. To this I say: 1, there is no State but in the first place will seek to preserve its owne safety and peace.

“2 Wee cannot give land to any person by vertue of our combination, except wee first receive them in to our state of combination, the which wee cannot doe with them for our owne and others peace-sake, &c.

“3 Whereas their necessity have been so much pleaded, it is not knowne that ever they sought to finde out a place where they might accomodate themselves, and live by themselves, with their friends, and such as will follow after them, where they may use their liberty to live without order or controule, and not to trouble us, that have taken the same course as wee have done for our safety and peace, which they doe not approue nor like of, but rather like beasts in the shape of men to doe what they shall think fit in their owne eyes, and will not be governed by any state. And seeing they doe,” &c.

here in hope to gett y^e day to make up their penyworth in advantage vpon vs, wee haue inst cause to hear y^e eomplaynts of so maney of our neighbours y^t liue in y^e towne orderly amongst vs, and haue brought in their eomplaynts with maney reasons against them not to admite them, but answer them as unfitt persons to be receiued in to our poor & meane estate.*

William Arnold.

§ So now there was one Robart Coles and John Greene who were Two of y^e 13 purchisers of pautuxet lands; Robart Coles being a fauerit of gortons gaue him half of his ūdeuided lands at pautuxet, & John Greene one of his chiefe prossolightes gaue gorton half of his deuided lands at pautuxet. so by nertue of those gifts, gorton & many of his companey went & built houses at papaquinepaug in pautuxet purchis; & gorton & his companey perceued y^t pautuxet mens deeds from myantenomy to bee weeke, thay bought patuxet lands againe ouer y^e heades of those men that had dwelt there 3 or 4 year before, who had bought y^e sayd lands of socannan-oeo y^e true howner and sachim of pautuxet lands — but gorton & his companey who becomming as bad and insolent & turblent as him self, and so thay beeganne to warne William Arnold & William Carpenter that had dwelt there 4 year before thay came there, that thay should begone or else thay must be there tennants: & much other wiked & insolent behanior, insomuch that William Arnold and Carpenter were forced to snbiect them

*“ Now if these Reasons and much more which have been truly said of them, doe not satisfie you, and the rest of our neighbours, but that they must be receiued into our Town-state, even unto our utter overthrow, &c. then according to the order agreed upon by the Towne, I doe first offer my house and land within the liberty of the Towne unto the Towne to bye it of mee, or else I may, and shall take liberty to sell it to whom I may for mine advantage, &c.”—WINSLOW, p. 62.

selues to y^e masachusetts: and Robart Coles who had giuen gorton half his vndeuided land at pautuxet, perceuid that hee was like to loose all, hee Joyned with William Arnold & William Carpenter & so subiected them selues and their lands to y^e Gouernment of y^e mashatuset together. but gorton & his company grewe more insolent & wicked then euer thay were, insomuch that those 3 men made there complaint & puttitioned the massatusets for help & sucker against them. where upon y^e Gouernor & asista[nts] of y^e massachusetts sent a warrant vnto gorton & his companey in this manner as followeth: § * Where as william arnold and Robart Coles & others haue lately put themselues & their famelies lands & estates vnder y^e protection & Gouernment of this Jurysdiction, & haue since complained to vs, That you haue vpon pretence of a late purchise from y^e Indians you goe† about to depriue them of their lawfull intrist confirmed by 4 years possession & otherwise to molest them: we thought good therefore to wright to you on their behalfe to giue you notice that thay & their lands being vnder our Jurisdiction, we are to maintayne them in their lawfull Rights. if therefore you haue any Just titell to any thing thay possesse, you may proceed against them in our court, where you shall haue equall Justice: but if you shall proceed to any violence, you must not blame vs if we shall take a like course to right them‡ —

John winthrop

gourener

Thom dudely

Ri — bellingham

Incr: nowell

y^e 28. of y^e 8th m — 1642 —

* The passage between § § not in Winslow.

† "That you haue vpon pretence &c. *gone* about to deprive them," &c. SIMPLICITIES DEFENCE, p. 6.

‡ This "warrant" may also be found in Gorton's "Simplicities Defence," p. 6, first ed.

The following, from pages 51 to 54 of Winslow's Reply to Gorton, is probably from the pen of Winslow. It was prefixed, by way of explanation, to some documents furnished him by the Massachusetts Government against Gorton.

"The Publisher to the Reader.

The reason wherefore nothing is answered to the great charge in his voluminous Postscript, is because it hath beene answered already by a former treatise printed: but more especially because many of the friends, children and kindred of the dead are in good esteeme with us, whom I am loth to grieve.

But since by course thou art next to cast thine eye Gentle Reader upon the summe of a Presentment which the Court at *Road Island* received from their Grand Jewry being present when *Samuel Gorton* had so much abused their Government in the face of the country, yea in open court, their owne eyes & eares bearing witness thereunto they I say presented these abuses to the court, as such which they conceive ought not to bee horne without ruine to their Government, and therefore besought the bench to thinke of some one punishment for examples sake as well as otherwise to bee inflicted on the Delinquent.

And therefore that thou maist see the occasion thereof, take notice that an ancient woman having a Cow going in the field where *Samuel Gorton* had some land. This woman fetching out her Cow, *Gortons* servant maid fell violently upon the woman beating and notoriously abusing her by tearing her haire about her, whereupon the old woman complaining to the Deputy Governour of the place, hee sendeth for the maid, and upon hearing the cause, bound her over to the Court. The time being come and the Court set, *Gorton* appeares himselfe in the defence of his maid, and would not suffer his maid to appeare or make answer, but said expressly she should not appeare, and that if they had any thing against her they should proceed with him. And though hee was lovingly dissuaded by some of the Bench not to engage

himselfe but let his maid appeare, yet hee refused: but when hee could not bee prevailed with, the action was called and witnessnes produced, sworne, and examined: which being done, hee moved for another witsnesse to bee called, which hee perswaded himselfe and the Bench was an honest woman and would speake the truth. Now shee being sworne, said, *Mr. Gorton*, I can speake nothing will helpe your maid. And indeed her whole testimony was against her and for the old womens cause, whereupon hee openly said, Take heed thou wickied woman, the earth doth not open and swallow thee up. And then hee demanded of the Court if hee should have equity and justice in his cause or no? To which was answered, if he had either plea or evidence to produce in his maids cause it should be heard. Then hee nominated one *Weekes* who could say something to it. *Weekes* was called and required to take his oath before hee spake; at which *Gorton* and *Weekes* both of them jeered and laughed and told the Court they were skilled in Idols, and that was one, and stood stoutly a long time to make it good. Here-upon some of the Court put him in mind how they had forewarned him of such earriages fearing he would fall into some extreames. At length the Governour gathering up the summe of what was witnessed, commends it to the Jewry. At which time *Gorton* said, the Court had perverted justice and wrested the witnesses, with very many high and reproachfull termes; and in the midst of his violence throwing his hands about, hee touched the Deputy Governour with his handkerchiefe buttons about his eares (who it seemes sate at a Table with his baeke towards him) whereupon the Deputy said, what will you fall about my ears? To which *Gorton* answered I know not whether you have any eares or no? and if you have I know not where they stand; but I will not touch them with a paire of Tongues. [tongs] The Governour after calling upon the Jewry to attend the Cause, was as often interrupted by him. Whereupon many of their Freeman being present, desired the Court they would not suffer such insolencies, professing they

were troubled the Court had borne with them so long. For which in briefe, he was committed, but when the Governour bade the Marshall take him away; he bade take away Coddington, which was their Governour's name: a thing I thought meet to explaine, lest thou shouldst not understand it by the Heads of the Presentment here following, abusing all and every particular of the Magistrates with opprobrious terms. But note when hee was comitted upon his mutinous and seditious speeches, *Weekes, Holden, &c.* his abcttors, stopped the way with such insolency, as the Governour was forced to rise from the Bench, to helpe forward the Command with his person, in clearing the way, put *Weeks* in the stocks, and was forced to command a guard of armed men to preserve themselves and the peace of the place: And this they did because of some fore-going jealousies; and now taking occasion to search the houses of that party that adhered to him, they found many of their peeces laden with bullet: and by meanes hereof they were forced to continue their guard, whilst upon their banishment they were forced from the Island.

And however it were enough for a Book alone to relate all the particulars of his insolent carriage, yet take notice onely of two or three particulars: 1, When hee was censured to bee whipt and banished, he appealed to *England*; they asked him to whom? Hee said with a loud voice, *To King Charles*. They told him, hee should first have his punishment, and then afterwards hee might complain. To which hee replied, take notice *I appeale to King Charles, Cælo, or Selah*; the party who was present told mee hee could not tell which, but that word was spoken with an extraordinary high and loud voice.

A second thing to be observed, was, that after hee had been so deservedly whipt, some of his faction said, Now Christ Jesus had suffered.

And thirdly, although the weather was very cold, the Gov. going away after execution of Justice upon him, yet he ran a good way after the Governour

drawing a chaine after one of his legs, the upper part of his body being still naked, and told him, He had but lent him this, and hee should surely have it again. All this I had from a man of very good repute, who then lived with them, and was an eye & care witnesse to all these proceedings.

In the next place take notice good Reader, that when he went from hence well whipt, as before, and entred upon his banishment, the place hee went to (in a sharp season) was a Town called *Providence*, where Mr *Roger Williams*, & divers others lived, who in regard of the season, entertained them with much humane curtesie, but the Gortonians answered all like *Æsops* snake, as thou maist read by the severall Letters of the chief Inhabitants of that place, by a notorious faction there also by them raised, to the great distraction and amazement of the Inhabitants, as appeareth by their dolefull complaints in their own Letters, a true Copy whereof I present unto thee."

The following letter of Governor Coddington to Governor Winthrop, from the original now before me, has never, to my knowledge, been printed. It will be perceived, that it deserves a place in this connection. The copy of the record alluded to, has reference without doubt, to the proceedings against Gorton, which we have here published in full. I have taken the liberty to punctuate the letter in a few places. Gorton, at the date of this letter, was probably in England.

"Honoured S^r

I thought meet to informe yo^{re} that yo^r sonn m^r John & all his, Depted from o^r Island of the 3 day in the morneing arely, the wynd being not good to Carye them further then block Island. but of the 4 Day in the morneing it was very good, so y^t I Doubt not they were all safely arriued before the

Storme begane: by whome I receaued yo^r letr of the 21 of the 8.46. for Gorton & his Companye they are to me as ever they haue bene, their freedom of the Island is Dennyed, & was when I accepted of the place I nowe beare. the Comishoners haue Joyned them in the same Charter, tho we mentayne the Govern^t as before. to further that end yo^w write of, I sent to M^r Cotton to be Deliuered to M^r Elott, y^t requested it, w^t was entered upon record under the Seceretaryes hand, w^h I Doe think yo^w may Doe well to mak vse of, because I heare it sinkes most wth the Earle, wher they had libertie of consyence. M^r Petters writes in y^t yo^w sent to yo^r sonn, y^t yo^w psecute. & soe in hast I rest, not Doubting as accatione serves to approue my self.

Newport Nou^r.

11. 1646.

Yo^{rs} ever
W^m Coddington

my purposse is er long to come in to the baye. I Desire to be rembered to all y^t remember me."

[Superscribed]

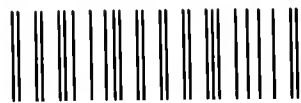
To his honnered frind

John Winthrop Esq

Go^r of the Massachusets

p m^t Robt Jefferye

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 111 135 8